

If you are interested in learning more about public access and interpretation for Florida's archaeological sites, please contact:

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
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(850) 487-2299  
FAX (850) 414-2207  
<http://www.flheritage.com>

For information on National Register status and benefits, please contact:

Bureau of Historic Preservation  
(850) 487-2333  
also at the address above.

For information on incorporating archaeological sites in Greenways and Trails, please contact:

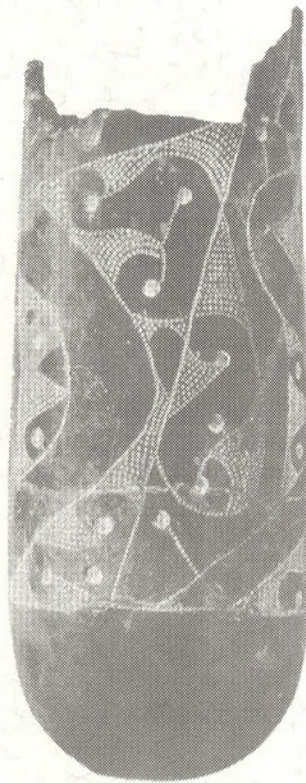
Office of Greenways and Trails  
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<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/index.html>



A publication funded by the Florida Department of Community Affairs, Florida Coastal Management Program, pursuant to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Award No. NA97OZ0158. The views expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the State of Florida, NOAA or any of its subagencies. February 2000.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND PRIVATE PROPERTY: PROVIDING PUBLIC ACCESS AND INTERPRETATION



The Weeden Island site, AD 450-1000, is held in private and public ownership. The owners cooperate to allow public access and provide interpretation. Artifacts, such as this vase from the site, can be viewed at museums and researched through publications.

Division of Historical Resources  
Florida Department of State  
Katherine Harris, Secretary of State

### Can the public benefit from privately owned sites?

People are fascinated by archaeology, and one of the ways we can satisfy our curiosity to learn more about the past is by visiting archaeological sites. While some of the most important archaeological sites in Florida are located in parks and preserves, many sites are found on private land. Privately owned sites, however, can be made accessible to the public and enjoyed by everyone in a variety of ways that are compatible with private ownership.

### Why give public access to archaeological sites on private property?

Archaeological sites connect us to those who lived before us. They remind us that we were not Florida's first inhabitants, and that we share our history with other peoples. Archaeological sites help us understand that certain places deserve protection and stewardship for their cultural, scientific, and even spiritual significance. For property owners, providing public access can contribute to an appreciation of a community's heritage, can support local tourism, and can even provide tax benefits for sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



A hypothetical rendering of an Apalachee hamlet, ca. 1600-1700, based on archaeological evidence and historical documentation.

### What are some of the ways in which the public might access privately owned archaeological sites?

While not all archaeological sites are well suited to public visitation, others can be opened to the public in ways that are consistent with private ownership. Some options are listed here.

#### Scheduled Site Visits

Public access to an archaeological site can be planned to accommodate an owner. Visits can be frequent, say on a monthly basis, or infrequent, as in a seasonal event, or even simply upon request. In some cases, owners may arrange with local organizers, like museums and historical societies, to manage visitation.

#### Published Materials

Whether or not archaeological sites are opened to the public, they can be interpreted through a wide variety of published materials like brochures, pamphlets, walking guides, driving or cycling guides, historical narratives, videos, books, and newspaper and magazine articles.

There is a wealth of literature available on Florida's heritage.



By bike or by car, there are many interesting archaeological and historical sites in Florida that are already open to the public. More are being added to greenways, trails, and parks each year.

#### Walking, Cycling, and Driving Tours

Archaeological sites in a region can be organized as a tour. A walking tour may be appropriate for sites located close together. Such tours can be led by a knowledgeable guide, or self-directed by means of brochures, pamphlets, or signage. If sites are farther apart, a bicycle or driving tour is more suitable and can also follow a guide or publication. A commercial tour company or non-profit organization can organize a tour incorporating privately owned sites. Fund-raising events are a good way to rally support and increase access.

#### Virtual Tours

Interpretation of archaeological sites on the internet offers great opportunities for public

access without visitation. The multimedia capabilities of the Internet allow text, photographs, video, and even sound to be available to millions of people. Many web sites include virtual tours of archaeological sites, some of them interactive, featuring reconstructions along with archaeological and historical information. This medium is very cost effective.

#### Exhibits

Archaeological sites can be featured in exhibits at local museums, visitor centers, libraries, and other public places. They can include text and graphic information, as well as objects from the site and possibly other related sites.

#### Heritage Tourism

Tourism and preservation can be profitably combined with entertainment, education, conservation, and business. There are many opportunities to develop heritage tourism in Florida, and archaeological sites should be incorporated as an integral part of any such plan. Sites you can visit should be especially featured, but tours can also include museums, which feature exhibits of archaeological sites, as well as discussions or presentations of key sites within a region.



Publicly owned sites, such as Crystal River State Archaeological Site, serve as models for public access to privately owned sites.

### For More Information

#### Publications

*A Community Resource Guide for Greenway Projects.* State of Florida, Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Greenways and Trails, Tallahassee, Florida, 1997.

*Archaeology of Precolumbian Florida.* By Jerald T. Milanich, University Press of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, 1994.

*Florida Cuban Heritage Trail.* Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation, Tallahassee, Florida, 1997.

*Florida Tourism and Historic Sites.* Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation, Tallahassee, Florida, 1988.

*Florida Heritage Magazine.* Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation, Tallahassee, Florida.

#### Internet Resources

Old City Cemetery: The Virtual Walking Tour  
[www.state.fl.us/citytlh/public\\_works/occhhead.html](http://www.state.fl.us/citytlh/public_works/occhhead.html)

The Aucilla River Prehistory Project: A Virtual Exhibit of the Florida Museum of Natural History  
[www.flmnh.edu/natsci/vertpaleo/auquilla/arp01.html](http://www.flmnh.edu/natsci/vertpaleo/auquilla/arp01.html)

The National Park Service, Southeast Archaeological Center: Links to the Past  
[www.cr.nps.gov/seac/](http://www.cr.nps.gov/seac/)